

Girl, Wash Your Face Summary

By Rachel Hollis

Are you waiting for a knight in shining armor to come to your rescue, to be woken up by true love's kiss, or for a prince to arrive with a shiny glass slipper? Perhaps you think that once you lose a couple of pounds, everything will be perfect? Or, maybe you're unhappy because your apartment is too small, your job isn't what you'd hoped for, or that you're failing to live up to your own expectations of motherhood?

Girl, Wash Your Face, by bestselling author, motivational speaker, blogger, Instagram sensation, and Christian, Rachel Hollis, gives pragmatic advice on reclaiming agency. We all have the power to change our lives, we need to stop reaching out to other people to solve our problems and asking questions we already know the answers to.

Have you just resided yourself to the fact that this is your life, and nothing will change?

Enter Rachel Hollis from stage left, carrying a Louis Vuitton purse, and she's here to give us the kick in the pants that many of us need. Rachel Hollis is a big sister figure with a no-nonsense tough-love attitude. *Girl, Wash Your Face* was written in response to the myriad of questions Hollis receives through various platforms. However, she found that all the questions are just different iterations of universal questions. After finding herself giving generic answers that gently comfort women with the idea that "anything is possible," she realized that she also needed to get real.

This summary briefly takes us through the shame that women inflict upon

ourselves, and encourages us to take ownership of our lives. *Girl, Wash Your Face* is about Hollis's struggles, and how overcoming obstacles opens up possibilities, giving us the courage to make necessary changes. Each chapter introduces us to a common lie that we tell ourselves, and then works through this lie with helpful and practical wisdom, girl talk, and bible quotes. In the words of Hollis, 'You are in charge of your own life, sister, and there's not one thing in it that you're not allowing to be there.'

Outside Influences and Influencers Shouldn't Control Happiness

Have you ever scrolled through social media and thought, 'Why can't my life be like that'? Or have you ever compared yourself to someone and felt that they're a lot luckier than you? Maybe you're seeing idyllic images of a mum and her kids baking and laughing together and wondering why you can't replicate that magic.

As a lifestyle and social media influencer, Rachel Hollis knows what a trap social media in particular can be. Irving Goffman described this as front-stage versus back-stage work, and argued that all of us undergo impression management at some point or another. Most of what we see on social media is an unrealistic representation of life that has been frontstaged. We don't see the backstage of what's going on. We don't see the fights, the crying children, the failed cupcakes, or the mess. The truth is that when we engage in social media, we're undergoing impression management, and we're presenting the best version of our lives that we want others to see. Hence, from the outside looking in, we see perfection as opposed to reality.

Everyone is struggling, and nobody has it easy. Hollis argues that we need to take responsibility for our happiness, and that perfection is a myth and not the path towards fulfillment. We need to learn to embrace gratitude, stop comparing ourselves to others, rid ourselves of anything harmful or toxic, surround ourselves with positivity, and do what makes us happy. According to Hollis, one of the most important things we can do is to schedule in happiness, and make time for the things that bring us joy. So start writing a list of what makes you happy, and get to it!

When To Say Yes, and When To Say No

When was the last time you put yourself first?

How often have you promised yourself you'd go for a run, or take a yoga class, or sit down and read a chapter of a book? Usually, what happens is someone else comes along and demands our attention, and so another day passes where we don't go for that run, or attend that yoga class, or enjoy that book that's gathering dust on our bedside table.

The more we break promises to ourselves, the more we tell ourselves we aren't worth it, and that other people are the priority. Hollis says that we need to ingrain a sense of accountability in ourselves. It sounds like a small thing, but keeping small promises ensures that we keep big promises to ourselves. The lesson is that if you can do the little things, then you'll adopt the mindset to do the big things too. So start with setting small goals, say no to overcommitment, and be honest with yourself. Being genuinely accountable means that you have to acknowledge when you're being flakey, when you're procrastinating, or when you're genuinely busy or in need of rest.

Another way to say yes to yourself is not to let other people derail or say no to your dreams. If you're the type of person who has been led to believe that your dreams don't matter, or that you're not capable of reaching your goals, don't listen. Your dreams are important, and perseverance is critical.

Say yes to creating dreams and daydreaming. Hollis says that creating dreams and fantasies helped her to reach many of her goals. For example, she had always dreamed of owning a Louis Vuitton purse, and so, with her first significant paycheck, she splashed out and bought the handbag. It was a huge extravagance, but it was a symbolic purchase that made her believe in herself and her chosen path.

A few things to say no to are the idea of the perfect mother, thinking motherhood should come naturally and be easy, and feeling connected to your child at all times. Postpartum depression is a reality for many women, and it has nothing to do with failure or your inability to love. The advice is simply to take care of yourself and your baby. That's it. As your child grows up, it's also okay to say no to volunteering and school commitments. You don't have to compare yourself to other mums, and you can decide how you want to parent.

Furthermore, say no to putting unrealistic timelines on goals. There's no expiration date on goals, so instead, give yourself credit and celebrate what you've achieved. Finally, say no to putting unrealistic expectations on how your home should look. There will be times when you need to embrace the chaos, but just remember that you need to do what makes you happy.

Feeling Inadequate

For decades women have been told that we can have it all. The mythology around women being able to do everything, and to be at the top of their game in order to be seen is pervasive. For anyone who has tried to have it all, you'll know how utterly exhausting this is. Hollis recounts the story of her own workaholicism. Hollis was a workaholic because she wanted to prove that she was excellent at something. She believed she was failing at home, and therefore she dived into her work to hide her feelings of inadequacy.

Rather than listening to our bodies, many women ignore the warning signs, and soldier on so that they feel accomplished and valued. Many women overcompensate for feelings of inadequacy, and when they achieve excellence, they aren't actually able to relish in it or celebrate. It's time to start believing that we're good enough, and to celebrate the small and big victories in equal measure. Hollis recommends therapy, to practice self-care and self-love, and to work for joy above all else.

Feeling inadequate can also manifest in being judgmental or bitchy towards other women, or feeling the need to compete.

Have you ever stood in a grocery store and seen a child throw a tantrum? Have you ever sat next to a screaming child on a plane? In any of these situations, has your knee-jerk response been to criticize the mother?

Hollis recounts a story where she criticized a stranger for what she believed to be poor behavior. While on a plane, Hollis observed a badly behaved child who was given a bag of candy to quieten him down. Hollis

believed that the bag of candy was just rewarding bad behavior, but she realized how judgemental she'd been when she saw the woman later. The woman was near tears and obviously very upset. The lesson is not to judge anyone until you know what they're going through, and respond with support and kindness rather than judgment.

No one is immune to passing judgment, so we need to learn to recognize it in ourselves. Despite what we think, we often don't have all the answers or know what's best. Surround yourself with kind and supportive people, and avoid toxic people who tend to judge and berate others. Instead of criticizing other people, look for their positive qualities. Ask yourself why you're judging other people and lashing out. Judgment is often a sign of insecurity and fear, so be honest with why you're jumping to conclusions about others.

Love Should Make You Happy

You may have watched the generic Hollywood movie where the girl has to get a makeover in order to make herself attractive to the high school jock?

How often have you changed yourself for a partner, or adapted your behavior to suit what you think they want? In relationships, women often become unrecognizable to themselves, and make staying in a relationship their ultimate goal. We often put up with being mistreated and make excuses for a partner's unkind or even abusive behavior. Overtime this situation is normalized, and we find ourselves in a relationship where we feel as if we're the problem. Women need to learn to realize their value, and, if we don't have self-value, we can't expect others to value us.

If you're only getting scraps, and if you're not a priority you need to leave. Walking away from a toxic or unloving relationship is the greatest act of self-love you can show yourself.

We often become clouded by love or ideas of love, so lean on trusted friends and family to talk to about your relationships. Foster self-respect. If you don't respect yourself, no one else will. Describe your relationship to yourself and ask whether or not it sounds healthy and the best thing for you.

Put Life into Your Sex Life

Many women experience a lot of anxiety and insecurity around sex and sexuality. The bedroom is another area of life where women typically put themselves last. Despite being a devout Christian, Hollis says that if you're in a loving partnership; you should enjoy sex and prioritize it. Furthermore, she says that just because you're a Christian doesn't mean that sex shouldn't be enjoyable, and there should be no shame in enjoying sex with one's husband.

Sex can be particularly tough for women who have had children and feel

that their bodies have changed. Hollis says that we all need to be a lot kinder to ourselves and celebrate our bodies. She suggests making sex fun enough to choose it over anything else, by openly discussing what's fun and enjoyable about it with your partner. Put work into sex, prioritize yourself and what turns you on, and never take communication with your partner for granted.

In Conclusion

Girl, Wash Your Face offers pragmatic and no-nonsense advice to women who need a nudge or even a strong push. By basing it around her Christian values, she shows how faith can empower and guide anyone who needs to reevaluate their life direction. Hollis argues that if we're unhappy, we need to take responsibility for this and permit ourselves to make the changes we need. Ultimately happiness is a choice, and Hollis says, 'You must choose to be happy, grateful, and fulfilled. If you make that choice every single day, regardless of where you are, or what's happening, you will be happy.'

Furthermore, 'recognizing the lies we've come to accept about ourselves is the key to grow into a better version of ourselves.'

There are also valuable tips on dealing with trauma and hardship, communicating when you feel vulnerable, and being honest about your feelings. The author also offers advice on reframing body image, striving towards a healthier body and mind, and avoiding using alcohol as a crutch. Hollis also encourages inviting tolerance and diversity in all aspects of our lives. There's never been a better time to dedicate to your goals and dreams.

So instead of wallowing, making excuses, comparing yourself to others, waiting for someone to come and rescue you, get out a piece of paper

and write down a list of things that makes you happy. You're in control of your own happiness, so start now.